



Small Business, “Seller” Informational Packet

www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking



What is the Tennessee Business Matchmaking program?

Tennessee Business Matchmaking is a series of business-to-business matchmaking conferences offered by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. Its purpose is to match small and diversity businesses with federal, state, and local government agencies and large corporations that have actual contract opportunities. The goal is to stimulate jobs and growth for Tennessee's small business. Tennessee Business Matchmaking will host a matchmaking conference in each of the three regions of Tennessee. Each event will attract approximately three hundred small business owners and one hundred buying agents. In addition to matchmaking opportunities, business owners will have access to expert small business advisors in training sessions and the exhibitor hall.

Who is Tennessee Business Matchmaking for?

The program is specifically tailored to existing small businesses and small manufacturers that are prepared for the challenges of doing business with government agencies and large corporations.

How many appointments can a participant expect?

On average, each participating small business will have 3-5 appointments. There are opportunities to obtain more appointments on-site with special last minute availability and many businesses get upwards of 10 appointments by pursuing these opportunities the day of the event.

What is the agenda for the Tennessee Business Matchmaking Regional Events?

7:00-9 a.m.	Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:00-8:45 a.m.	Opening Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Opening Remarks• How-To Introduction to Business Matchmaking
9-9:45 a.m.	Training Sessions (<i>concurrent</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Center for Industrial Services, University of Tennessee• Export Tennessee, Trade Roots
10-12 Noon	Buyer/Seller Scheduled One-on-One Procurement Meetings Exhibitor Displays
12 Noon-1 p.m.	Buffet Lunch
1:30-5:00pm	Buyer/Seller Scheduled One-on-One Procurement Meetings Exhibitor Displays Training Sessions (<i>concurrent</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Center for Industrial Services, University of Tennessee• Export Tennessee, Trade Roots

**What is the format for the Business Matchmaking meetings?**

Scheduled buyer and seller meetings are fifteen (15) minutes in length with a five-minute break in between to allow buyers and sellers to move to their next appointment. Here is a suggested way to break down each fifteen minute meeting:

- 2 minutes – Introduce your company and give a brief company overview
- 3 minutes – Describe your products or services
- 3 minutes – Describe your past performance and successes achieved
- 5 minutes – Interact with the buyer and learn more about opportunities and next steps

How does the Business Matchmaking process work?

The Department of Economic and Community Development has established an online matchmaking program that allows a small business, or “seller,” to register for each matchmaking event. During registration, “sellers” provide product and service codes that are used to match them with procurement representatives that are looking to buy their product or service. Once a match is made, the matchmaking system generates an appointment for the small business and procurement representative. All appointment setting for each regional event occurs in the weeks before each event.

How do you match buyers and sellers?

Utilizing the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code® (UNSPSC®), small businesses are able to highlight their products and services. The matchmaking system then uses the codes as the basis of determining what buying organizations these small businesses appropriately match with in order to set appointments. It is the responsibility of each small business to correctly enter their product and service codes prior to each event.

Will participating companies get government or corporate contracts during the regional events?

The Tennessee Business Matchmaking Program doesn’t guarantee contracts because of the nature of the formal bidding process between buyers and suppliers. However, these events create opportunities for small businesses to hold personal, one-on-one meetings with potential clients that would have taken weeks or months to schedule on their own.

How is a small business defined?

The SBA’s standards define whether a business entity is small and thus, eligible for federal government programs and preferences reserved for “small business” concerns. Size standards have been established for all for-profit economic activities, or industries, in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For complete details, visit <http://www.sba.gov/size>.



What does participation cost?

There is a \$35 registration fee for all small businesses, or “sellers”. This fee has been subsidized by governmental sponsorships, including the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), East Tennessee State University, and other local sponsors.

How do small businesses pay the \$35 registration fee?

Secure payment can be made through the Tennessee Business Matchmaking website at <http://www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking> by using a debit or credit card. No other forms of payment will be accepted.

How and when do small businesses and small manufacturers register?

Registration typically opens eight weeks before each event and is available for a four to five week period. Registration is only available online at <http://www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking>.

Can a business register in person at regional events?

Due to the extensive preparation and scheduling, on-site registrations will not be accepted.

How many representatives from each company may attend?

Only one representative from each participating small business may attend the conference.

Which buyers (government agencies and large corporations) participate in Business Matchmaking?

The list of buyers – agencies and corporations – who have either confirmed participation or expressed strong interest in participating in Business Matchmaking can be found at <http://www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking>.



What should small business owners do to prepare for the matchmaking experience?

1. Prepare and Anticipate

In anticipation of talking with procurement representatives, have basic materials describing your company and its products and services in good order. Practice your presentation.

2. *VERY IMPORTANT*****

Register in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Database (www.CCR.gov)

Any vendor that wishes to sell its products or services to the federal government is required to register in CCR in order to be awarded contracts and receive payment. This is a one-time routine registration where basic information is provided relevant to procurement and financial transactions. If a business has not registered, they must obtain a DUNS number, provided by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). You may learn more about this process at <http://smallbusiness.dnb.com>.

3. Get Assistance in Preparation

To maximize your experience at Tennessee Business Matchmaking, make sure you become familiar with and are registered in the appropriate databases of the government entities you are targeting for business. Federal, state and local governments have their own criteria and maintain their own vendor databases. Proper registration will facilitate your ability to contract with the government in an expeditious manner. Doing business with the government for the first time can be a daunting experience, but there is help. Your local Small Business Development Center can explain the steps you need to take to get ready for doing business with the federal government. To find your local Center, visit www.tsfdc.org.

4. Review the Material Provided

Get familiar with the material provided through the website and electronic tutorial – particularly that which describes the various resources the SBA, SCORE, SBDC and others make available in the local community. Visit the Tennessee Business Matchmaking website www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking to get started right away.



Identifying Your United Nation Product and/or Service Code A Guide

Search Directions:

1. Go to <http://www.unspsc.org>
2. Click on "Search the Code" at the top of the page
3. Enter a product or service description in the "Search Title" box

Tip: Use "%" as a wild card. For example, entering "%Clamp%" will return all codes containing the word "clamp". From there you can determine specific clamps that may pertain to your business. (Note: enter "%Clamp%" without the quotation marks in the actual search).

What is the UNSPSC?

The United Nations Standard Products and Services Code is a hierarchical convention that is used to classify all products and services. It is the most efficient, accurate and flexible classification system available today for achieving company-wide visibility of spend analysis, enabling procurement to deliver on cost-effectiveness demands and allowing full exploitation of electronic commerce capabilities. The UNSPSC was jointly developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Dun & Bradstreet Corporation (D & B) in 1998.

How does UNSPSC work?

The UNSPSC is a hierarchical classification with five levels. These levels allow analysis by drilling down or rolling up to analyze expenditures. Each level in the hierarchy has its own unique number.

XX Segment - The logical aggregation of families for analytical purposes

XX Family - A commonly recognized group of inter-related commodity categories

XX Class - A group of commodities sharing common characteristics

XX Commodity- A group of substitutable products or services

XX Business Function - The function performed by an organization in support of the commodity



All UNSPSC entities are further identified with an 8-digit structured numeric code which both indicates its location in the taxonomy and uniquely classifies it. An additional 2-digit suffix indicates the business function identifier.

A structural view of the code set would look as follows:

(example) Hierarchy Category Number & Name

Segment 43 - Information Technology Broadcasting and Telecommunications Communications
Devices and Accessories

Family 20 - Components for information technology or broadcasting or
telecommunications Computer Equipment and Accessories

Class 15 - Computers Computer accessories

Commodity 01 - Computer switch boxes Docking stations

Business Function 14 Retail

How do I find a product or service in the code?

The easiest way to find the codes that you are searching for is to do a search of the codeset. Go to: <http://www.unspsc.org/> and Click on “Search the Code” at the top of the page. We suggest entering a description in the “Search Title” box. It can be a partial description; use “%” as a wild card. For example, entering “%Clamp%” will return all codes containing the word “clamp”. From there you can determine specific clamps that may pertain to your business.

Sometimes a commodity may not be found because:

- Different phrases are used in different regions. For example, the term “cooling exchanger” is the same commodity as a “heat exchanger”; “allen wrenches” are the same commodity as a “hex key”.
- The item may be described by what it is rather than how it is used.
- The code is only searchable in English (this will soon change)

Source: <http://www.unspsc.org/FAQs.asp>, December 28, 2005



NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
312 8TH AVENUE NORTH, 11TH FLOOR
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243
[HTTP://WWW.TNECD.GOV](http://www.tnecd.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 5, 2006

Contact: K. Dawn Rutledge Jones
Office: 615.532.1910
Cell: 615.351.8481
E-mail: dawn.rutledgejones@state.tn.us

Tennessee Business Matchmaking To Stimulate Small Business Growth In 2006 *ECD's BERO Planning Regional Business Matchmaking Conferences*

NASHVILLE – The newly-created Tennessee Business Matchmaking Program will begin visiting all regions of the state in 2006, pairing small businesses, including small manufacturers, with government agencies, corporations and large manufacturers that have potential contract opportunities.

The first conference is slated for April 20, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. in the Tri-Cities area at the Centre at Millennium Park in Johnson City, Tenn., with events to follow in West and Middle Tennessee in the summer. The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's (ECD) Business Enterprise Resource Office (BERO) is organizing and hosting the series of regional business matchmaking conferences in partnership with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

"We believe these regional matchmaking conferences will help to stimulate jobs and growth for Tennessee's small businesses," said ECD Commissioner Matthew Kisber. "The matchmaking program provides unique opportunities for small businesses to meet with government agencies and large corporations in a way not previously possible on such a large-scale basis. While the program doesn't guarantee contracts, because of the nature of the formal bidding process between buyers and suppliers, it does create opportunities for small businesses to hold personal, one-on-one meetings with potential clients that might have taken some weeks or even months to schedule on their own."

Tennessee Business Matchmaking is modeled after the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Business Matchmaking event held in Nashville last March. About 800 small businesses and 200 buyers from government agencies and large corporations participated in the one-day event, which generated \$2.5 million in contracts for participating Tennessee small businesses.

ECD's BERO provides technical, financial and management information assistance to small, minority and women-owned businesses and will oversee the Tennessee Business Matchmaking program. BERO also manages a small manufacturing initiative program that provides technical assistance to small manufacturers and matches them with large manufacturers. To learn more about Tennessee Business Matchmaking, visit <http://www.tnecd.gov/matchmaking>.

###